

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Charles J. Bell, March 31, 1909

THE AERIAL EXPERIMENT ASSOCIATION HEADQUARTERS BADDECK Nova Scotia ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL, CHAIRMAN G. H. CURTISS, DIRECTOR OF EXPERIMENTS F. W. BALDWIN, CHIEF ENGINEER J. A. D. McCURDY, SECRETARY-TREASURER March 31, 1909 Mr. Charles J. Bell, Trustee of Aerial Experiment Association, Washington, D. C. Dear Sir:

The Aerial Experiment Association of which you are trustee expires to-night by time limitation and all the property, inventions and rights belonging to the Association now pass into your hands as trustee to be disposed of as you think best in the interests of the members of the Association, subject to the following conditions which contain the substance of the resolutions and agreements of the Association relating to the matter.

The property of the Association, coming into your hands as trustee, to be sold by you as you think best in the interests of the members of the Association, and the proceeds to be divided by you equally between Alexander Graham Bell, J.A. Douglas McCurdy, F. W. Baldwin, G. H. Curtiss and the heirs of the late Thomas E. Selfridge, after paying over to Mabel G. Bell 1% of the proceeds for every thousand dollars she has contributed to the funds of the Association.

This means that upon disposing of the property of the Association you pay over the proceeds as follows:—

35% to Mabel G. Bell.

13% to Alexander Graham Bell.

13% to J. A. Douglas McCurdy.

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13% to F. W. Baldwin.

13% to G. H. Curtiss.

13% Thomas E. Selfridge.

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Two applications for United States patents have been prepared upon the Hammondsport work of the Association. One of these, which has already been filed in the Patent Office, is an application, numbered 485281, in the name of Mr. F. W. Baldwin as inventor which will be issued assigned to you as trustee of the Aerial Experiment Association. The other, which has not yet been filed in the Patent Office as it requires the signature of Mr. E. A. Selfridge, administrator of the estate of the late Thomas E. Selfridge, is a joint application in the names of Alexander Graham Bell, J. A. Douglas McCurdy, F. W. Baldwin, G. H. Curtiss, and Thomas E. Selfridge. This application also, if granted, will be issued assigned to you as trustee for the Aerial Experiment Association. The expenses of obtaining these patents have been assumed by me personally until such time as you can dispose of them in the interests of the Association it being understood that you will transfer these patents to the purchasers of the inventions of the Association upon their refunding to me the amounts expended in obtaining the patents.

The members of the Association assume that you will dispose of their inventions to some Company for stock or cash which will be distributed in the proportion shown above. It has occurred to us that your work, as trustee, could be greatly simplified if the members of the Association, including the legal representative of the late Thomas E. 3 Selfridge, should be organized in the form of a Joint Stock Company. Then you could simply transfer all the property of the Association to this Company distributing the shares in the proportion named.

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Yours sincerely, (Signed) Alexander Graham Bell. Chairman of the U.S.A. P.S., March 31, 1909— The above letter has been formally approved by the Association through the vote of the members here present namely — Mr. Douglas McCurdy, Mr. F. W. Baldwin and myself. I will send copies to Mr. Curtiss and Mr. Selfridge so that you may have the formal approval of all the interests involved. I will also communicate with you later submitting suggestions concerning the future of the A.E.A. work which have received the approval of the members here. A.G.B.